UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social
Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.4/1999/160
27 April 1999

Original: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Fifty-fifth session
Agenda item 9

QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS IN ANY PART OF THE WORLD

Letter dated 26 April 1999 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the Chairperson of the Commission on Human Rights

I have the honour to transmit, enclosed herewith,* a letter from His Excellency, Mr. Zivadin Jovanovic, Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, addressed to His Excellency, Mr. Alain Dejammet, President of the Security Council of the United Nations. I would like to ask you to have it circulated as an official document of the fifty-fifth session of the Commission on Human Rights under agenda item 9.

(signed): Branko Brankovic

Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

---

* The annex is reproduced as received, in the language of submission only.

Belgrade, 24 April 1999

Mr. President,

It is a month today since NATO began its aggression against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. That aggression is the most flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations since the inception of the world Organization and a setback to the foundations of the international legal order, as well as a crime against peace and humanity.

For the sake of truth and history, I cannot but note that the Security Council has ignored several requests made so far by the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, whether those made before the NATO aggression to prevent it or those made afterwards to condemn it and take measures to halt it. It is not difficult to predict what kind of consequences that is going to have for the future of relations in the world and for the fate of the United Nations itself.

Let me, however, remind you and the Council in brief of the facts testifying to the character and the past consequences of the NATO aggression.

NATO aggressors have concentrated primarily on civilian targets, directly endangering the lives and fundamental human rights of the entire population of Yugoslavia. NATO bombs dropped on the towns and villages to date have killed about a thousand civilians, including great many children. A few thousand civilians have sustained injuries and will be crippled for life. The mass killing of civilians in the mining town of Aleksinac, in Belgrade, Pristina and Nis, of passengers on an international passenger train in the Grdelica gorge as well as of refugees from Bosnia and Croatia in several refugee centres and massacre of a refugee convoy on the Djakovica-Prizren road as they returned home, and a countless other examples will forever bear witness to crimes against humanity. In doing so, the NATO aggressors have used weapons prohibited by international conventions, with children very frequently being the victims. Proof of it are sever children killed in Srbica, five shepherd boys killed in the village of Doganovici and a five-year old Milica Rakic killed in Batajnica - they all died of the sprinkle and delayed effect of cluster bombs. There is evidence also that NATO uses other internationally prohibited weapons. By systematically and massively bombing towns and villages NATO has caused an exodus of refugees. Prior to aggression 2,000 foreign representatives (KVM) and the personnel of humanitarian and other organizations left Kosmet, and with the onset of bombing and devastation of residential areas and civilian deaths, there started a flux of refugees.

H.E. Mr. Alain Dejammet
President of the Security
Council of the United Nations
New York

An assassination attempt made by NATO aggressors against the President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on 22 April 1999 represents an organized terrorist act without precedent in the civilized world. That is a crime not only against a Head of a sovereign, independent State, but also a direct attack on the will of a European people and on the fundamental democratic values of the civilization. It is incomprehensible that the Security Council has not yet found it pertinent to condemn this criminal act which is, in itself, an attack on the foundations of international law.

Concurrently with the humanitarian, NATO has also created an environmental disaster threatening almost the whole of Europe, which was the subject of a separate letter that I addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and to the relevant UN agencies.

The destruction of a dozen private radio and televisions stations as well as of Radio-Television Serbia, which was bombed on 23 April, is an expression of the preponderance of one opinion, the biggest aggression against freedom of thought and a disgrace to the civilization on the doorstep of a third millennium. Its purpose is self-evident: a media monopoly by NATO in order to manipulate world public opinion. This is more than a sign of alarm to those who care anything about truth and freedom, and a call for sobering up before the inquisition of NATO generals takes full control in their own countries and full control of the whole world.

Several thousand private homes and flats, some three hundred schools, dozens of hospitals and health institutions, hundreds of places of worship and cultural monuments have been destroyed. Almost a million pupils and students had to stop attending schools and universities. The destruction of civilian factories has meant that more than half a million workers are out of work and approximately two million people without income.

These are but a few indicators of the effects of NATO aggression. All the effects - humanitarian, economic, environmental and health - are hard to see right now. Many of them will be seen much more clearly with the passage of time. It is clear, however, the effects will not be limited to Yugoslavia only. NATO has breached the Charter of the United Nations and directly threatened, and continues to threaten, international peace and security. Nevertheless, this is not a sufficient warning to, and the reason enough for, its strategists to stop the aggression. What is more, however, NATO is trying, by combing pressure and various promises - to enlarge the number of participants in the aggression and, in particular, to draw the neighbouring countries into its plans. Simultaneously, attempts are currently underway in the Security Council to force - under the guise of alleged care for the refugees and guarantees for their safe return - a post festum legalization of aggression and to involve even the United Nations in the crime against peace and humanity.

In view of the above, I urge you once again to take initiative to have the Council, in accordance with its responsibilities spelled out in the Charter, to condemn in the strongest terms the NATO aggression, violation of the Charter and international law, and to take specific steps to end the aggression without delay. This will, at the same time, contribute to the creation of conditions for restoring peace and stability in the region and for settling all issues by political means.

Yours respectfully,

Zivadin Jovanovic
(Signed)

- - - - -